

AGAINST THE PRIX

BURNED OUT

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ITALIAN RUM

Guida all' Italia leggendaria, misteriosa, insolita, fantastica. Volume I.
656pp. Milan: Sugar Editore. Lire. 4,000.

41 Maddox Street London, W.1.

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Bodley Head

SELF-ACCUSED

GEROLD FRANK: *The Boston Strangler*. 351pp. Cope. 30s.

This is a very odd book indeed. It is the story of thirteen horrifying sex-murders in Boston, Mass., in a period of nine months in 1962-63, and of the man who says he committed them; and you believe him or not according to taste but according, much more, to your experience of emotional confessions during sensational murder trials. It is episodic, unplanned, doris to and fro between crimes, places, police stations, hospitals, courts; over-written where restraint would have better served the author's undisguised purpose; full of those phrases ("she shrugged her shoulders", "he smiled", "his long face grew dreamy") which hallmark the pop-history genre; and without either index or table of contents, both of which it divinely needs.

As it went to press the blurb announces blandly its central character, Albert DeSalvo, having been certified mentally fit to stand his trial, faced charges of indecently assaulting more than 300 women and girls—to which also he proudly confessed. Presumably therefore he is also fit for trial as the multi-murderer he professes to be, but he is not being tried for this because the only evidence against him is his own enormously long "confession", and the American courts have bound themselves not to convict on confession alone. Still,

What kind of trial could it have been, once this book had appeared? His attorney has now decided to contest the verdict, on the issue of insanity, by bringing out the thirteen-murder confession just as Christie did here in 1933—"the more the merrier", said Christie to his psychiatrist. Published in Great Britain, the book has been reviewed and its contents discussed in a host of papers exported to the United States. In this country, where we call this contempt of court, we once on similar grounds fined the *Daily Mirror* £10,000 and imprisoned its editor for three months. This must be the only book ever to have said on its dust jacket: "As this book goes to press the trial begins."

That consideration apart, the murders seem to have annihilated the confidence of Boston's entire civic administration, to say nothing of the F.B.I., leaving the field open—gratefully open—to every kind of pseudo-medico-psychological quackery. It

is as if Scotland Yard were to say, of last year's "involved" "murders" in London, "Right. We've got them now. Not a clue. No one talking. We must do something or we and the Home Office are out. Bring on the mediums, the water-diviners, astrologers, crystal-gazers, Old Moore..."

When you think of that terror-stricken city, where HUBBARD women live alone, and where for months the murders had pushed all other news off the front pages, it is easy to understand the desperation in the hearts of elected officialdom. In one of his more successful moments of historical perception Gerold Frank outdoes Edgar Allan Poe:

The sixty-year-old widow of a physician was watching television about 7 p.m. when a knock sounded on her front door. She opened it. A man stood there, his features indistinct in the gloom of the porch. "Your husband, the doctor, told me to look you up." The woman's snarl prickled. Her husband had been dead ten years.

Many a scalp will prickle as this book is read by the lonely. Doors will be locked, telephones answered in fear, just as in Boston four years ago. Does such a book do any good? In an Aristotelian sense, perhaps. The pity and the terror will come flooding in; and the money.

SOVIET AND OTHER SCIENCE FICTION

ILYA VARSHAVSKY, VLADISLAV KRAPIVIN, SEVER GANSOVSKY, ARKADY STRUGATSKY, BORIS STRUGATSKY, G. GOR, ANATOLY DNEPROV: *Path into the Unknown*. 191pp. MacGibbon and Kee. 25s.

JOHN CHRISTOPHER: *The Little People*. 189pp. Hodder and Stoughton. 18s.

GENTRUE FRIEDBERG: *The Revolving Boy*. 191pp. Gollancz. 18s.

ANORÉ NORTON: *The X Factor*. 191pp. Gollancz. 15s.

EDGAR PANGBORN: *Davy*. 265pp. Dennis Dobson. 25s.

Path into the Unknown is a selection of Russian stories of the future which is presented in a curiously off-hand way, without preface, without reference to the selector or editor, or mention of translators. So that it is difficult to determine how representative these stories are, or the extent of the interest in this kind of fiction in the Soviet Union. Presumably the Russian publishers to whom acknowledgments are paid consider them representative, and it is possible to deduce from internal evidence of style and subject something of the public which is being addressed. There is here none of the exclusiveness which encloses so much American Science Fiction, no tangle of technological or theoretical terminology, but a quiet assumption of general familiarity in the audience with the basic principles and preoccupations of modern science. The themes posited are mainly philosophic, rather than technological or socio-political, such as the status in relation to humans, of synthetic creatures with a higher practical intelligence than those who made and use them (a further projection of the class-war?). But the most striking contrast between the Russian writers and their analogues in America and Britain lies in the basic assumptions from which their "extrapolations" are launched.

In the west it is now more or less taken for granted by SF writers that the world of the future, and the imminent future, at that, faces either inevitable devastation and catastrophe or a society more ideologically to its technological inhumanity than ever George Orwell could dream up. In these Soviet stories neither possibility is even hinted at. Humanity has solved all its outstanding political and social problems and is now united in its extension of scientific research and endeavour to remoter fields. This bland assumption sometimes leads to naivety in the writing but also gives an opportunity for idyllic lyricism reminiscent of the Chekhov of "The Steppe" (as in Vladislav Kravtsov's "Meeting My Brother"), and also for humorous domestic anecdotes, in the style of the unfortunate Zoshchenko, about the reactions of robot domestic servants to their less gifted human masters. There are also surprises for those who have fixed ideological ideas about what the Russians are allowed to write (or publish) in a story by G. Gor called "The Boy". In which the mind of a young boy, son of a professor of archaeology, is invaded by the memory of a boy visitant to this Earth in the Jurassic Age. "Pytha-

goras' metempsychosis! Were that true!" A strange speculation to find embedded in the philosophy of dialectical materialism!

Notable among other typically Russian mental acrobatics is a strange extravaganza on the subject of antimatter, in which communication is established with an "anti-earth" containing the mirror-reflection of every form of life and substance, on this earth. In this ingenious story, "The Purple Mummy" by Anatoly Dneprov, the only phenomenon which is not made clear is how communication resolves itself into anti-communication.

It must be said, however, though the western aficionados of SF may groan and sneer at Soviet naivety and optimism, that the Russian picture of the future, viewed as a dynamic inspiration in the present, is far more refreshing and straightforward than even the best baroque productions of the west.

Among these latter, John Christopher presents for the best part of his book the standard plot for a women's magazine serial: old Irish castle in the middle of a bog inherited from eccentric uncle by beautiful young London secretary, who turns it into a guest-house; improbable selection of visitors observe satires of "little people" dressed in green. So far all Irish mist and moonhoof. Then all turns grim, too late and too suddenly. Flooding of papers proves little people to be products of a Nazi scientist's experiments in interfering with the pituitary glands of embryos from pregnant Jewish women with a view to prolonging life. The improbabilities of situation and character (and thick overlay of Irish peasantry) muffle any significant impact this bizarre revelation might have had.

Miss Friedberg's thinly fatalistic, but insufficiently articulated, tale of a boy born in a space-ship in a state of weightlessness (the ultimate space experiment), is a lary story trying hard, but vainly, to be scientific. The boy at birth becomes subject to an orientating influence from the centre of the cosmos by which he is able later to direct osteophysicists into communication with something or other from deep space. Over-writing does not compensate for lack of plausibility.

With Miss Anoré Norton we are so far out that we do not even know what galaxy we are in. "Diskon", futuristic, mutant son of a space explorer, out of place in any world, his father is at home in escapes by stolen space-ship to an unknown

planet, where he discovers telephonic communication with the native creatures, the ruins of an ancient civilization, space pirates, galactic archaeologists, and a lot of good old B.O.P. adventures. Strictly pre-Conan Doyle stuff, in spite of the terminology, and scientifically often vivid: owing smelching, perhaps, to Kipling's *Jungle Stories*, but removed too far to signify.

In Mr. Pangborn's *Davy* we are on different ground altogether, solid ground. This is a very serious and carefully constructed book, enriched by an acutely penetrative historical, psychological and anthropological imagination. In credibility and expression it shows no weakness at all. Mr. Pangborn is rare in realizing that a new situation and environment evoke a different consciousness from ours, and consequently an appropriate mode of expression. In the narrative of his protagonist, Davy, born on orphan in a Czech brothel, he employs a sort of neo-Chaucerian lingo which is rosy, lurt and completely convincing.

But here we are in what is left of the north American continent, to the first years of the fourth century "after the Deluge". It is a medieval world, dominated by the Holy Murcan Church, part feudal kingdom, part Athenian city-states (both based on slavery). Nothing is known of the world beyond the eastern seaboard, or west beyond the ridge of the Kaskil mountains. Some old-time books still exist, but only the precepts of the Murcan Church are allowed to see them. Only the Heretics, the underground resistance, have themselves discovered some of these old-time records, and are corrosively at work undermining with their rationalism the overwhelming superstitions and mythological corruptions of the established church. After a number of ribald, red-blooded, often hilarious adventures in this meticulously established world, the hero Davy joins up with the Heretics, who, like Pilgrim Fathers to reverse, eventually launch out upon the great Atlantic Ocean and make Utopian landfall on one of the (now uninhabited) islands of the Azores group, still knowing that they cannot rest here, but must proceed with the search for the lost continent of which the old-time records speak.

This is a most distinguished book, both by virtue of its imaginative structure and of its entirely original and convincing style. Mr. Pangborn also manages to present us with a number of variously lovable characters in a frightening, but sometimes beautiful world.

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MARCH BOOKS

Autobiography of *Benjamin Franklin*. Allen and Unwin. 1967.

Literary Criticism: *John Galsworthy: A Study*. J. Galsworthy. 1967. 113pp. 10s.

Science: *Concentrated Nutrition*. J. Galsworthy. 1967. 113pp. 10s.

Poetry: *John Galsworthy: A Study*. J. Galsworthy. 1967. 113pp. 10s.

History: *John Galsworthy: A Study*. J. Galsworthy. 1967. 113pp. 10s.

Letters and Memoirs: *John Galsworthy: A Study*. J. Galsworthy. 1967. 113pp. 10s.

Biography and Memoirs: *John Galsworthy: A Study*. J. Galsworthy. 1967. 113pp. 10s.

Essays: *John Galsworthy: A Study*. J. Galsworthy. 1967. 113pp. 10s.

Novels: *John Galsworthy: A Study*. J. Galsworthy. 1967. 113pp. 10s.

Plays: *John Galsworthy: A Study*. J. Galsworthy. 1967. 113pp. 10s.

World Affairs: *John Galsworthy: A Study*. J. Galsworthy. 1967. 113pp. 10s.

Dependence: *John Galsworthy: A Study*. J. Galsworthy. 1967. 113pp. 10s.

SELECTED PAPERBACKS

Art and Archaeology: *John Galsworthy: A Study*. J. Galsworthy. 1967. 113pp. 10s.

Astronomy: *John Galsworthy: A Study*. J. Galsworthy. 1967. 113pp. 10s.

Biography and Memoirs: *John Galsworthy: A Study*. J. Galsworthy. 1967. 113pp. 10s.

Essays: *John Galsworthy: A Study*. J. Galsworthy. 1967. 113pp. 10s.

Fiction: *John Galsworthy: A Study*. J. Galsworthy. 1967. 113pp. 10s.

History: *John Galsworthy: A Study*. J. Galsworthy. 1967. 113pp. 10s.

Literary Criticism: *John Galsworthy: A Study*. J. Galsworthy. 1967. 113pp. 10s.

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Plays: *John Galsworthy: A Study*. J. Galsworthy. 1967. 113pp. 10s.

Science: *John Galsworthy: A Study*. J. Galsworthy. 1967. 113pp. 10s.

Social Studies: *John Galsworthy: A Study*. J. Galsworthy. 1967. 113pp. 10s.

World Affairs: *John Galsworthy: A Study*. J. Galsworthy. 1967. 113pp. 10s.

BOOKS RECEIVED

[The inclusion of a book in this list does not preclude its subsequent review]

of the library and museum which Hunter bequeathed to Glasgow University. He has had the whim to write this story as though it were Hunter's autobiography, and has succeeded admirably in an easy pastiche of eighteenth-century style. He achieves his authorities, but achieves verisimilitude by neatly concealing the passage from fact to fiction. The full detail of Hunter's life is not here, but he appears as a real, many-sided man, a physician and naturalist eagerly collecting books and manuscripts, paintings and coins, and mixing with his friends at Court or the Academy. Sir Charles has provided some "guidance for the research student", but his fine study of a great man deserves a fuller "apparatus" and an adequate index.

STANFORD, J. K. *Tail of an Army*. 218pp. Phoenix House. 25s.

A veteran of the First World War recounts his experiences in the Second. Colonel Stanford was chiefly occupied as an inspector of ordnance stores in the rear but he waged his own campaign against the scummers in the Western Desert and elsewhere. His is always an army in which the other tank drop their rifles and the worthwhile collect manages to get on a nag before breakfast, but he packs this memoir with incidents that astonish, amuse and sometimes impress.

HECKSTALL-SMITH, ANDREW. *Sacred Games*. 195pp. Blond. 25s.

Games today is a rather sad and chaotic little backwater upon which a spurious gaiety is imposed for ten days a year. It is difficult for a post-war generation to see it as a focal point in the golden age of high society—a meeting place of the rich and the famous, where it was seemingly forever summer. Mr. Heckstall-Smith successfully recaptures this bygone atmosphere: he evokes too the vulgarity, snobbery and ostentation that accompanied the heady gaiety. He was too much part of it all to write dispassionately. There is too much sentiment and not enough irony, and the title is a stale, bad pun. But Mr. Heckstall-Smith was not a journalist for nothing. He writes affectionately of those such as Sir Thomas Lipton or Sherrin Hoyt whom he particularly admired, and many of his anecdotes are very funny indeed.

Drama

New American Drama. Introduction by Charles Marowitz. 203pp. Penguin. 5s.

A distinct sound of barrel-scraping pervades this collection and Charles Marowitz, in his introduction, does nothing to minimize it. Indeed he might have been a good deal kinder to Jack Richardson's comedy of human interchangeability, *Gallows Humour*, and Murray Schisgal's *The Typist*, a dramatic equivalent of time-lapse photography—both interestingly experimental pieces. There is not one agreeable, much to be said on behalf of Edward Albee's *The American Dream* or Arthur Miller's *In the End*.

New English Dramatists. 9. Introduction by Michael Hollington. 192pp. Penguin. 4s. 1d.

The material in this collection is selected from productions over the past three years and contains two remarkable plays: the West Indian playwright Barry Jackson's study of a comprehensive school outsider, *Skylark*; and Donald Hinde's farcical comedy of warped affections, *A Life in London*. Arnold Wesker's cyclically idyllic *The Farm* seems, however, to be a little less than the volume.

Education

DRACE, HUNTER. *Language for Teaching*. 184pp. Chatto and Windus. 18s.

Mr. Drace shows how far English teaching has moved from the old static study of literature and language. His theme is that because words are labels their meaning can differ according to who uses them, to whom, and in what context. Yet the book is more than a putting of the tenets of linguistic philosophers. The major theories of the child's acquisition of language are considered and criticized, and the application of these theories to the classroom is clearly indicated. Each

chapter ends with "the practical aspect" and Mr. Drace is particularly interesting in the language of mathematics and the light thrown on it by the Nuffield Mathematics Teaching Project for children from five to thirteen.

Mathematics

HATTERSHAW, ALBERT. *Mathematics in Management*. 256pp. Penguin. 7s. 6d.

There is in any discipline, said Kant, as much science as there is mathematics, and now the management of men is being made amenable to mathematical treatment. In large-scale enterprises there may soon be no other way. With examples chosen from aeronomics, Mr. Hattershaw was a lecturer at Cranfield before becoming a Fellow of Balliol—oil refineries, transport and other big industries, this Pelican Original shows how such techniques as matrix algebra, Laplace transforms, the differential calculus, graphs, the theory of communication and statistics have manifold industrial applications. It will help the modern manager to put the right questions to his computer.

Gardening

SMITH, MISS. *The Garden in Winter*. 176pp. Museum Press. 21s.

No gardener worthy of the name suppresses nowadays that gardening must come to a halt each year when the plants are killed and the garden borders cut down, but not everyone is sure how to set about prolonging interest outside. A number of books have been written on the subject, but few so good as this one. Winter colour in leaf and stem, berries, variegated evergreens, protective hedges and windbreaks, even tips on what to wear when working outside on a cold day—Miss Smith is thorough. Even an old hand may find himself learning from her, especially in her comparative account of shrubs with richly coloured stems and fruits. The book is illustrated with some very agreeable drawings by the author.

History

BRADSHAW, M. C. *The Tragic Pursuit of "Timon of Athens"*. 37pp. 1966. 10s.

ULLMAN, WALTER. *The Relevance of Medieval Ecclesiastical History*. 35pp. Cambridge University Press. 5s. 6d.

The texts of recent inaugural lectures by the respective holders of the Chairs of English and of Medieval Ecclesiastical History at Cambridge, Professor Bradshaw develops the idea that *Timon* is less a complete play than a show—an experimental scenario for an indoor dramatic pageant, and composed when Shakespeare's company moved from open stages to the new Blackfriars theatre. In the second lecture, Professor Ullmann discusses the influence of the ecclesiastical society of the Middle Ages on our modern condition, and finds evidence of "a causal relationship between the ecclesiastical complexity of the Middle Ages and the ecclesiastical-secular twilight of the modern age."

Natural History

HAINES, GWEN. *Oush Among the Chimney Pots*. 128pp. Harvill Press. 16s.

The birds in the back garden can be as interesting as rarer varieties spied from a professional hide. Gwen Haines demonstrates this in her book *Oush Among the Chimney Pots*. She feeds, photographs and befriends her feathered residents and writes a good story about them too.

MARSHALL, A. J. (Editor). *The Great Extinction*. 221pp. Heinemann. £2 2s.

In Australia, though we are rather good at swimming and knocking balls about, we still lag behind many countries (which have much less to preserve) in our conservation policies," writes Professor Marshall in his concluding chapter, and certainly the preceding chapters (several of which he has written himself) support this view. They tell in the most outspoken way of the reckless killing of kangaroos (most for pet food and sub-standard sausage), koalas and emus (mostly for all of which are hares), the wrecking of timber forests, the despoliation of open country, and the wiping out of native plants. Almost always the culprit is man; acting in ignorance, because there is money involved or sheer love of wrecking. There is some hope for the future and it is blunt books like this which keep that hope in business.

Photography

PHILLIPS, VAN AND THOMAS, OWEN. *The Travellers' Book of Colour Photography*. 256pp. Paul Hamlyn. £3 5s.

Another gigantic volume from the House of Hamlyn containing 400 colour photographs taken by two travellers on a six-month tour of Europe and the U.S.A. which are supported by didactic captions for the amateur on holiday. It is a modern photograph album reproduced in blazing photographic of endless snail holiday scenes beneath blue skies of incredible eerily, which could not have been

taken by any amateur with an automatic camera. Most subjects are recorded in a pedestrian way but six of the pictures are brilliant and support the view that outstanding colour photographs are as rare as pearls and their skillful reproductions as rare as diamonds. As an enthusiastic amateur, George Howard Shaw, once said, "The photographer is like the eel, which produces a million eggs in order that one may reach maturity."

Sports and Pastimes

PHILLIPS, VAN AND THOMAS, OWEN. *The Travellers' Book of Colour Photography*. 256pp. Paul Hamlyn. £3 5s.

It is difficult to endorse about this year's *Travellers' Book of Colour Photography*. The design section is good, but the reviews of the year are not altogether accurate, and at least one appears to have been written long before the season was over. Most of the general articles are badly chosen and lack humour, colour or originality.

THICKER, JOHN. *Thick's Pudding*. Illustrated by the author. Foreword by M. P. Ansell. 144pp. Putnam. 16s.

This is John Thicker's eighth book; those who have already happily succumbed to his outrageous puns and deadpan advice need only be told that the latest instalment is well up to standard. Those sheltered few who have so far escaped, who nevertheless are involved with houses in some way, would do well to start on *Thicker's Pudding*; the drawings are nearly as funny as Thelwall's, and the text is riotous.

WILLIAMS, DONALD (Editor). *The Horseman's Year Book*. 144pp. Collins. 30s.

Articles on almost every equestrian aspect of the past year (including about polo), and recitals of all the main events in the show and racing world. In addition, there are contributions such as "from Chariot to Chariot", "The Horse in Shakespeare", and on the prospective B.H.S. training centre at Stoneleigh, from various hands. There is a nice misprint among the advertisements—*The Golden Book of Fairy Tales*.

REPRINTS AND NEW EDITIONS

Frank Cass have published the following: *An Anatomy of Inspiration* by Rosamond E. M. Harding, with an Appendix on The Birth of a Poem by Robert B. M. Nichols (145pp., 35s.), first published in 1940 by W. Heffer; *The King and his Dominion* by Herbert Vere E. Hall, with a new introduction by Zolman C. Hall (332pp., £2 10s.), first published in 1936 by Oxford University Press; *An Introduction to the Study of Blake* by Max Plowman, with a new introduction by R. H. Ward (159pp., 30s.), first published in 1927; *The English Brass and Copper Industries to 1800* by Henry Hamilton, with the original introduction by William Ashley, and a new introduction by J. R. Harris (389pp., £3 15s.), first published in 1926 by Longmans; *The Economic Development of Russia, 1913-1914* by Margaret Miller (321pp., £3 5s.), first published in 1926 by P. S. King.

Methuen have brought out a second edition of D. S. Walker's *A Geography of Italy* (295pp., £3 10s.), first published in 1958. A revised edition of Harskell Ellis's *My Life* (614pp., £2 5s.) has been brought out by Neville Spearman. It has a foreword by François Delisle, and an introduction and detailed bibliography by Alan Hall Watson and it first came out in 1910. The Cresset Press have published a new edition of *The Social Relations of Science* by J. G. Crowther (474pp., £2 2s.), first published in 1941. MacGibbon and Kee have published a second edition of Margaret Paxon's *The Family and the Love* (263pp., £2 2s.), first appeared in 1963 from Penguin.

Hollis and Carter have revised Salvador de Madariaga's *Portrait of Europe* (204pp., 25s.), first published in 1952, with a foreword to the new edition by the author.

